HEARTS COURAGEOUS

JOHN OXENHAM

.75

To Helen and Raynold
Christmas 1930

very good wish from
Mrs. Pope and Esther

HEARTS COURAGEOUS

By JOHN OXENHAM

THE ABINGDON PRESS
NEW YORK CINCINNATI

PRAIRIE BAPTIST CHURCH LIBRARY
7416 ROE
PRAIRIE VILLAGE, KANSAS 66208

First American Edition Printed
August, 1919; Reprinted December, 1919

TO YOU
THE UNDECORATED
LIVING AND DEAD
WHO GAINED
NO RECOGNITION IN THIS WORLD
THIS LITTLE BOOK
IS DEDICATED
IN PROFOUNDEST GRATITUDE
AND IN THE SURE BELIEF THAT
ELSEWHERE
YOU WILL RECEIVE IN FULLEST FULL
ALL THAT EARTH DENIED YOU

To You
The millions strong
Who lived, and fought, and maybe died,
Unknown, unsung—
Your highest honor that you gave
Yourselves, your all, Life's soul to save—
Here, now, our deep soul-thanks we give
To you,
Through whom we live.

Contents

	PAGE
Foreword	7
God's To-morrow	10
So Shall My Prayers Avail	11
Kent and Picardy	12
Look Beyond!	14
Kinsman—Canst Thou Forget?	15
Sorrow Shall Make Us Kin	17
Crosses	18
For the Boys	20
Over—and After	20
Pilots	22
When the Boys—	23
Cross-Mates	24
Ballad of the Wild Rose	26
Follow Me!	28
Mercury of the Red Wheel	29
And After?—	30
His Leave	33
"Lord, Is It I?"	36
Little Crosses in the Snow	37
Ten Men in a Crater Hole	38
Christ in the City	42
Hadst Thou Been Here	54
The Spread Table	55
The Menace of the Skies	56

PAGE

The Goodly Company..... 57
War..... 58
The Master-Carver..... 59
The Red Spring..... 60
The Dead Dog..... 65
Volvo..... 67
The Wandering Jew..... 69
Daily Bread—Verb. Sap..... 70
Diamond Dust..... 73
How—When—Where..... 75
Honor the Guns..... 76
Canst Thou Forgive?..... 78
For the Sick and the Wounded, the Dying, and All Prisoners of War..... 80
Inasmuch..... 81
W. A. A. C. S. and W. R. E. N. S..... 82
Your Helping Hand..... 84
Carry On.—And Make It So..... 86
If—!..... 87
What Do I Owe?..... 89
Acorns and Oaks..... 90
Love's Giving..... 91
À Dieu and Au Revoir..... 91
Waiting..... 93

Foreword

THE evil cloud is still heavy upon us as this little book goes to press. We are still under the red scourge.

But the hearts of the Allied Nations—comprising now practically every civilized nation free to express itself—sorely tried as they have been at times, have never failed them. Never was their courage and their determination to see the matter through to the bitter end higher than it is to-day.

The whole world is war-weary—weary to death and of death—and is righteously aflame at the shameful set-back humanity has suffered at the hands of Prussian Junkerdom.

But the only result of all those coldly calculated brutalities—except to their perpetrators and their victims—has been to set our goal more clearly than ever before us. We know now to the full what we are up against and what we are out to win.

We believe it absolutely essential for the future welfare of mankind that the hateful work so unexpectedly thrust upon us in 1914 should be done thoroughly—now—once for

all. Cost what it may, those evil powers which we so long suffered to menace the Freedom of Life have to be exterminated. Until the great prize of a world redeemed from war forever is won our efforts can know no slackening.

It is cause for thankfulness that out of this black horror of war there is growing steadily and surely in every civilized country the desire for a League of Nations—a Whole-World Pact—which, when this war and the originators of it are ended, shall make also an end forever of the powers of militarism and despotism, and so an end of the burden of arms, and shall give to the sorely tried world enduring peace and the fair fruits thereof.

When it is all over—as it must be before long if civilization is to survive—may we all have equal courage and determination to insist on a just and righteous settlement of all the mighty problems that will confront us. "Peace has its acid tests no less than war," and on the right solution of those problems depends the whole future of mankind.

Life is at the greatest Parting of the Ways it has ever known. Unless we choose the High Way our eventual end will be God's Great Scrap-Heap, along with all those other mighty empires which left the Great Master Builder out of their building.

The outcome of all this grim travail rests entirely with ourselves. It is within the power of each one of us to make or to mar in this, the only matter that matters.

Let each one of us keep ever and clearly in the very forefront of his or her mind that unless we make we mar. When Good and Evil are fighting to the death for the Soul of the World no neutrality is possible. We must all be either for or against.

So—let every man and woman among us think, work, pray, and in every way possible strive to the uttermost for that Righteous Peace and Nobler Living for hope of which so many of our best and dearest have died—for that Coming of God's Kingdom upon earth for which Christ himself strove, and hoped, and died. So shall we prove our loyalty to them and our devotion to that for which they gave their all.

And the end shall be a closer approximation to God's will and way than the world has ever yet seen.

God's To-Morrow

THE night is very black and grim,
—Our hearts are sick with sorrow—
But on the rim of the curtain dim
A pulsing beam, a tiny gleam,
Whispers of God's To-morrow.

Beyond the night there shines a light,
—Our eyes are dim with sorrow—
But Faith still clings, and Hope still springs,
And Love still sings of happier things,
For Life is flighting strong new wings
In search of God's To-morrow.

Hearts Courageous

So Shall My Prayers Avail

WOULD that my prayers could ring you with safe shielding
From all the ills that mortal life assail!
But only when to Him my best I'm yielding
Shall my poor prayers avail.

Only when over Life's most sore temptation
By His fair grace I shall at last prevail,
Only when I with Him find acceptation,
Shall my poor prayers avail.

So—that my asking may attain fruition,
That my desire for you in no wise fail,
Bare unto God I turn in deep contrition—
So shall my prayers avail.

Kent and Picardy

Gloire de Dijon, sweet *La France,*
Brave about me as I lie,
'Neath your fragrant canopy,
How your joyaunce all enhances
These my happy circumstances—
Gold-shot green,
Blue between,
Shafts of quivering silver lances—
While in front the world's expanses
Teem with life's supreme romances—
Air like wine,
Peace divine
With your glories all combine
Till my bower becomes a shrine.
Heaven itself seems near to me
In this tiny sanctuary.
But—from yonder shaded nook,
Just across the murmuring brook,
Comes a soft derisive cry,
Like a mocking lullaby—
"Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo! Cuck-cuck-oo!"

And then, upon the clear, sweet air,
I hear the guns—
The low, hoarse mutter of the guns,
The dread death-menace of the guns,

So low, so clear,
So far, so near;
Do I really hear or only feel
The vibrance of that growl of hell
As deaf men feel the thunder-peal,
The pounding of the mighty flail,
The impact of their dread appeal?
They stab my sense like venom steel,
They bruise my heart with ruffian blows;
With brutal thrust
And shock morose,
They break my life into the dust.
Their voice austere
Slays all my cheer:
The sunshine pales, the fragrance dies—
I face the awful verities.

For *you* are there behind the pall,
There in the murderous thick of it all—
You in that awful man-made hell;
And the guns that I hear so deadly clear
May be sounding your funeral knell.
And from the nook
Across the brook,
Comes mockingly,
Comes scoffingly—
"Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo! Cuck-cuck-oo!"

Look Beyond!

UNNUMBERED sorrows, woes beyond belief,
A world aflame with hate and gray with grief—
"Look beyond!"

This little life so short—a span at best—
And that short span a torment of unrest—
"Look beyond!"

So many gone—our bravest and our best;
The Golden Fields of Youth laid bare and waste—
"Look beyond!"

Wrong fills the world with foul iniquity;
"God's grace is more than man's obliquity—
Look beyond!"

What can life give to recompense such loss?
"Christ's path of sorrow led Him to the cross—
Look beyond!"

Before these horrors Hope and Love are dumb.
"Hold to your faith! God's best is still to come—
Look beyond!"

Kinsman!—Canst Thou Forget?

I LOVE to think upon Thy human need,
Thy baby fingers groping for the breast,
Thy white limbs on Thy mother's knee astride,
Thy soft head croodling down into its nest.

I love to think upon those hidden years,
When just a boy Thou wast, with other boys,
Sharing their hopes, their ventures, and their fears,
And jubilant with them in all their joys.

I love to think on Thy humanity,
Seeking God's way with ever-opening eyes,
Through the thronged courts of earthly vanity,
To that last crowning grace of sacrifice.

I love to think upon Thy dust-stained feet,
That ached and hardened with the stony road,
And craved relief from parch of noonday heat
In each cool stream that by the wayside flowed.

I love to think upon Thy needfulness
That made the sinner's kiss upon Thy feet
Balm for old Simon's lack of heedfulness,
And to Thy want a joy most exquisite.

I love to think upon Thy humanness
That welcomed sundown and the close of day,
Which left Thee free for just a little space
To climb the hill, and sit, and think, and pray.

I love Thy craving for sweet loneliness
When the strain grew past human strength to bear,
I love thy gracious calm amid the stress,
Yea, and the anguish of Thy last despair.

Though Thou wast God, yet truly wast Thou man—
Man like myself, since Thou life's round hast trod;
So, by Thy human sufferings, I can
Claim Thee as Brother yet acclaim Thee God.

Forget Thou canst not. God Thou art and man.
Thou too hast borne the yoke and kissed the rod.
By that, O Kinsman, to the full I can
Feel thee my brother, Father, Mother—God.

Sorrow Shall Make Us Kin

The Cark of Care has bitten in
To the core of every heart,
And the stress of life set lives apart
In the toil and the moil and the grime of the mart,
But—

—Sorrow shall make us kin.

Too much and too little have come between;
Too often, with jealous glance,
We have looked askance at the wayward chance
Which makes up the hazard of Circumstance;
But—

—Sorrow shall make us kin.

Shoulder to shoulder, Life's life to win,
We have fought the evil powers;
Now sorrow is yours and sorrow is ours,
And over us all the black cloud lowers;
But—

—Sorrow shall make us kin.

One died on the cross to vanquish sin,
In untold depths of woe,
By the Nail, and the Spear, and the Thorn, we know
He is Kinsman now as long ago,
For—

—Sorrow hath made us kin.

The whole world groans in its anguish keen,
And the whole earth suffers dearth,
But Life is coming to nobler birth
Since man is discerning his fellow's worth,
For—

—Sorrow hath made us kin.

Crosses

WITHIN my hand
A little cross
Of bronze—no more;
The cross you won
But never wore,
My son! My son!
My valiant one
Who died before
You ever wore
The cross you won.

Within Thy hand
I, broken, lie,
  And my cross bear
Unpatiently—
This lonely cross
  That none can share—
This crown of loss
In all that was,
  The memory of days that were.

No cross I won
Like you, my son.
  My bitter cross
  Is my sore loss
In you, my own,
My valiant one.

Perchance He looks
As lovingly
Upon my cross
As I on yours,
  And sees within
  The loss the gain
That Time engraced by Love insures.

For the Boys

When I lie quiet in my bed
And think of you dear lads out there,
The thoughts that crowd my heart and head
Are almost more than heart can bear.
And so I pray—
Wherever they be,
On land or sea,
Or in the air
Or under the sea,
We trust them, Father, to Thy care.
Wherever they be
They are with Thee;
Lord, be Thou with them everywhere,
And let them feel Thee there!

Over—and After

Lord, if I go,
Full well I know
I go to greater things
Than greatest here below—
Things that shall be to this
Poor life as Thou to my disparities.

I go to loftier hopes and nobler joys;
To the high peace of Thy divine employs;
To the eternal springs
Of all good happenings;
To the Sweet Fount of Life
That shall renew
My youth, and me endue
At length, at length
With eagles' strength;
With powers undreamed of in the life below—
Powers only Death, Thine Handmaid, can bestow.
So—without fear I go,
Because—I know!—I know!

This too I know—
That *there* I shall be nearer still
To Life's high need and Love's appeal
Than e'er before;
The shadowy veil that hangs between
Is growing luculent and thin,
And, from within, The Golden Door
Swings softly open—more and more,
That Love, unseen, may closer be
To Life's supreme necessity,
And, in God's own good time, may come
To lead the wanderer gently home.

Pilots

Pilots on land and Pilots on sea,
Pilots of high and low degree,
But of all the Pilots the Pilot for me
Is the Pilot who wings him, full and free,
Up into the blue infinity,
And nearer and nearer climbs to Thee
In his passion of new-found sovereignty
Of air and space, and high-borne grace
That is bred of the spirit of fearlessness;
—Nearer and nearer climbs to Thee,
And—nearer to eternity.

He is there—up there,
In the air somewhere—
But where?—ah, where
Is ofttimes known
To himself alone
And to God, in whose care
More than most of these wonderful men of the
air.

Carry on, up aloft!—
Carry on! Have no fear!
The Pilot of Pilots is near for your cheer;
He'll never desert you; He's always at hand
To answer in fullest your utmost demand,

And His arms everlasting about you, beneath,
Are wide as the heavens and stronger than death.
Though you fall, it is not unto death, but to life,
To the life that is nobler and fairer than this,
To the joys of activities grander than these—
To the limitless range of his true liberties.

When the Boys—

Say!—can your father-mother love,
Its boundless gratitude to prove,
One smallest, greatest thing refuse
In all the world that they may choose—
When the boys come home?

Troubles and clouds there may have been
Before this fiery discipline
Swept them beyond our anxious sight
And left us but their memories bright—
When the boys left home.

And think you that His greater love
Will of a poorer texture prove
Than yours?—or His sweet grace refuse
To those who did His High Way choose—
When the boys go home?

When the boys come home!—It may not be
To our whole-souled expectancy;
But O the welcome rich and warm,
When, taking heaven itself by storm—
The boys reach home!

Cross-Mates

I STUMBLED with my heavy cross
Along The Road of Woe,
And fell, and bruised myself full sore,
Till I no more could go.

And as I lay, crushed by the weight,
I cried for help to God,
And instantly a great light shone
Upon The Woeful Road.

And to the depth of my despair,
Upon the stark black night,
Came One of presence strong and fair
Like a great beam of light.

He stooped and raised the heavy cross;
He weighed it thoughtfully,
Then bent and took the great cross-beam,
And left the rest to me.

He lifted me and bade me stand
And be of better cheer;
New life flowed from His strong right hand
And loosed me of my fear.

"How can I thank Thee, Lord," I cried,
"For help so timely given?"
And when His eyes He turned on me
I caught a glimpse of heaven.

"Simon of old helped me to bear
My cross of bitter woe;
And ever since I help all those
Who can no longer go."

And so my cross became a crown,
Since he is crowned whose load
Is more than half borne for him
By the Holy Son of God.

Light was my cross with His good help,
And smooth the road did seem
When both in full I shared with Him
And His Cross-Mate became.

Ballad of the Wild Rose

One plucked a wild rose from the hedge
As he went idly by,
Nor thought it any sacrilege
His whim to gratify.

He plucked the wild rose from the hedge
And kissed it with a smile;
Its sweet, wild fragrance pleasured him—
He joyed in it a while.

An easy pleasure cheaply bought,
It cost him naught—and what
Costs naught is very cheaply bought,
And cheaply held, God wot.

He toyed with it a little while,
Then dropped it on the road;
He dropped it with a passing smile
And left it in the mud.

And from the mud the tumbled rose
Smiled up at the passers-by—
A wistful smile, a plaintive smile,
A smile that was a sigh.

"Why did he from the hedge beguile,
And leave me here to die?"
But her only answer was the moil
Cast up by the passer-by.

Then One came by who all things sees—
Heaven's glories, and the abyss
Of earth's unnumbered miseries,
And never one doth miss.

He stooped and picked the broken rose
From out the kennel mire,
And washed it clean in a running stream,
And did its petals tire.

There was red, I ween, in that running stream,
Red in that fair, white water;
Its touch from soilure did redeem,
For Love had sought, and healing wrought,
And with His blood had bought her.

She lay at rest upon His breast—
Could rose find fairer haven?
His chosen guest, her wrongs redressed,
His love her longed-for heaven.

Follow Me!

LORD, I would follow, but—
First, I would see what means that wondrous call
That peals so sweetly through Life's rainbow hall,
That thrills my heart with quivering golden chords,
And fills my soul with joys seraphical.

Lord, I would follow, but —
First, I would leave things straight before I go—
Collect my dues and pay the debts I owe,
Lest when I'm gone, and none is here to tend,
Time's ruthless hand my garnering o'erthrow.

Lord, I would follow, but—
First, I would see the end of this high road
That stretches straight before me, fair and broad;
So clear the way I cannot go astray,
It surely leads me equally to God.

Lord, I would follow—yea,
Follow I *will,* but first so much there is
That claims me in life's vast emergencies—
Wrongs to be righted, great things to be done
—Shall I neglect these vital urgencies?

Who answers Christ's insistent call
Must give himself, his life, his all,
Without one backward look.
Who sets his hand unto the plow
And glances back with anxious brow,
His calling hath mistook.
Christ claims him wholly for His own—
He must be Christ's, and Christ's alone.

Mercury of the Red Wheel

Mercury of the Red Wheel,
I sometimes wonder if you feel
Somewhere inside the heart of you
The freight you bear of joy or care—
Sweet breath of Life or blank despair—
Or does it all stop short of you?

You whistle as you glide along,
You break into a snatch of song,
And then "Rat-tat" upon the door;
And at your knock
Hearts brace themselves to meet the shock—

And one heart breaks beneath its load,
And one gives fervent thanks to God.

And you?—at times I think you feel
The weighty duty you fulfill,
For on your face I seem to trace
Signs of your message, good or ill.
And always when I meet you near
My home, I turn and wait to see
If you bring evil news for me.
And when you pass my door, I say,
"Thank God, it's not for me to-day."
And then I breathe a prayer for those
To whom the fateful message goes;
For these be times when none can say
What God will send him day by day.

And After?—

And after?—
When this war ends,—
As end it will, since God still IS—
In the defeat
Of that foul Ill that menaced life's fair ways,
In victory complete
For Truth and Right, and His uplifting grace
Of Freedom for the coming race,
What then?

Shall it be War or Peace?
With us it rests:
No less than War Peace has its acid tests.

War is most dreadful hell;
And yet full well
May Peace be fouler than War's foulest hell,
Unless some strong new soul of life
Rise up to stay—
To stay, if need be, with the knife—
The slow, insidious dry-rot of decay,
Which no whit less than war doth Christ betray;
Rise up to charge all life with quickened zest
For things not only better, but the *best*.

Peace that means laxing of the soul's upreach,
Peace that means but an ever-widening breach
'Twixt man and man—and so
'Twixt man and God;
Peace that means tolerance of obvious wrong,
Peace that means safety only for the strong,
Peace that means heedlessness of others' woes,
Peace that means chance new burdens to impose,
Peace that means wealth outsweated from the poor,
Peace that means Greed's perfidious coverture,
Peace that means palaces on pigstyes reared,

Peace that means gold with brave men's blood
besmeared,
Peace that means virtue offered out for hire,
Peace that means honor trampled in the mire,
Peace that means ill division of life's good,
Peace that means ill adjustment of life's load,
Peace that means brimming bowls and ruined
lives,
Peace that for sake of gain at shame connives,
Peace that maintains the standards of the past,
Peace that still leaves the Lord of All outcast—
That is no peace!
A mocking parody of peace,
It shall not last.

Peace that permits such cankers still to be
Is prostitution and soul-beggary.
Peace!—Rather war is it, insidious war,
Life-sapping, soul-debasing—hell's auxiliar.
Better than such a peace the grim, red scourge,
Whose bitterness hath yet a saving purge
That slays the bitterness in man inbred,
But makes men men before it leaves them
dead.

Peace without God as base and corner stone,
Peace without Right concreted in its frame,
Peace without Truth up-pillaring its dome,
Peace without Justice buttressing its walls,

Peace without Grace as its fair furnishings,
Peace without Honor as its golden lamp,
Peace that is all unfortified with Love—
That is no peace!
A straw house built on sand,
Which life's new needs can never meet,
Nor Time's rough circumstance withstand.

Get back to God and Fundamental Right!
Build His New House with patience infinite:
Resolve Life's vast complexities to ways
More simple, and exalt the days!
Let all Life's warp and woof be interwove
With gold of noble thought and radiant love;
So—only so—shall Life's New Temple stand
Rock-firm, unshakable, His rightful deodand.

See to it, then, ye Builders of the Peace,
And build with bold emprise Life's new-won
liberties!
Build His fair kingdom as He first designed
To His unending glory
And the welfare of mankind!

His Leave

My boy has got his leave at last!
He's to be home this week!
And I shall see his face again,
And I shall hear him speak.

And, O, I thank the Lord for it—
To see his face once more.
He's been out there nigh eighteen months,
And both our hearts were sore.

He's been in all the thick of it,
And scarcely had a scratch;
God heard his mother's prayers for him,
And over him kept watch.

His friends have fallen by his side;
They've all gone, one by one,
And, O, my heart has sorely grieved
For every mother's son.

Well, thank the Lord for sparing mine!
I thank Him night and day;
'Twas little I could do except
Just think, and hope, and pray.

And now he's got his leave at last;
Some day this week he'll come,
And none in all the land will have
A warmer welcome home.

. . . . . .

O God, that giv'st and tak'st away,
I cannot understand—
"Killed"—do you say?—"this very day
By a motor in the Strand?"

"Killed—my boy killed—right here—at home?
Come safe through all the fight,
And killed before I've seen his face?—
O God! That can't be right.

"Woe's me!—it's true. He got his leave
For which we'd ached so sore,
And it has proved his last long leave,
And he'll go out no more.

"We little thought how dear 'twas bought,
This longed-for leave of his.
I've feared for him all sorts of things,
But never dreamed of this.

" 'Twas me he came across to see,
But God saw otherwise.
We cannot hope to understand,
Or see things with His eyes.

"But, O, it's hard to lose him so,
And him so near to me.
Now he's at rest, and God knows best—
But it's all a mystery.

"He's gone, and I am all alone;
There's no one left to care.
O take me quickly, Lord, to join
My lad with Thee up there!"

"Lord, is it I?"

One in the darkness wanders wide,
The dim lands where the shadows hide,
Follows false fires, and far from home,
Dwells with the things that creep and roam,
And though Love calls, makes no reply—
"Lord, is it I?"

And one in primrose paths doth stray,
Content with pleasures of the day,
Culls the fair flowers that fade and die,
And, heeding not that night is nigh,
Seeks but his sense to satisfy.—
"Lord, is it I?"

And one did set to climb the hill,
But wearied of his better will,
And ere half way he laid him down,
So sore the cross, so far the crown,
While on himself he did rely.—
"Lord, is it I?"

And one doth bravely breast the height
Where Faith and Hope are blessed with Sight,
And, casting all his burdens on
The steps that lead up to the throne,
He to his Father draweth nigh.—
"Lord, is it I?"

The Master bowed
His thorn-crowned head
And said no word,
But each one heard
The Voice within him—
"Thou hast said!"

Little Crosses in the Snow

O ENDLESS little crosses in the snow,
They are but tokens of our love for you,
Our Brothers, Our Brothers!

"My life I gave to bring the world more light,
And you gave yours for what you deemed the Right,
My Brothers, My Brothers!

"Your woes were great, your sorrows multiplied,
I died for you, now you for me have died,
My Brothers, My Brothers!

"But none of you is fallen from my hand;
Bravely you fell, now safe with me you stand,
My Brothers, My Brothers!

"You through the Gate of Death have come to
Life—
My peace for those who waged the goodly
strife,
My Brothers, My Brothers!

"So not for you I sorrow—not for you,
But for the Wrong from which this foul thing
grew,
My Brothers, My Brothers!

"O Life, O Life, why still so deaf and blind,
When here in me all healing we may find?—
My Brothers, My Brothers!"

Ten Men in a Crater Hole

EPISODE À LA MODE

TEN men in a crater hole—
Orders—"Bar the way!
You men hold that crater hole,
Cost you what it may!"

Ten men in a crater hole,
Facing a brigade,
Sworn to hold that crater hole
Till the last man's dead.

Ten men in a crater hole
Holding up a host;
Ten men in a crater hole
Proud of their high post.

Ten men in a crater hole—
"Rat-at-tat-at tat!"
That's the song of the crater hole,
That's the game it's at.

Ten men in a crater hole—
Two hot Lewis guns:
Great the toll of the crater hole
On the close-packed Huns.

Ten men in a crater hole,
Holding Death at bay;
Ten men in a crater hole
Scything human hay.

Nine men in a crater hole,
Doing all men can
Fine men in a crater hole—
"Join you soon, old man!"

Eight men in a crater hole,
Faces hard as steel,
Great men in a crater hole
Fighting with a will.

Seven men in a crater hole
  Cursing till all's blue;
Merry men in a crater hole
  Giving Fritz his due.

Six men in a crater hole,
  Somewhat short of breath;
Four men from the crater hole
  Shaken hands with Death.

Five men in a crater hole,
  Five gone up along;
Five alive in the crater hole
  Going big and strong.

Four men in a crater hole,
  Carrying on the show;
More men from the crater hole
  Cheering those below.

Three men in a Crater hole,
  Fighting gallantly;
Free men in a crater hole
  Show how free men die.

Two men in a crater hole,
  Fearless to the last;
Few men in a crater hole
  Ever lived so fast.

One man in a crater hole,
  Sticking it alone;
One great soul in a crater hole,
  Fed up—well-nigh done.

. . . . . .

Ten men from the crater hole,
  Arm in arm they've gone;
Plain men from a crater hole,
  All their duty done.

Ten men from the crater hole,
  Up at G. H. Q.—
"Ten men, Sir, from a crater hole,
  Done our best for you!"

"Ten men from the crater hole,
  You have given your best;
Great souls from the crater hole,
  Welcome to My rest!"

Christ in the City

A MOTOR bus was grinding up the road
To Marble Arch, when, by the little fane
Named after His Ascension, suddenly,
Unhailed, unwontedly, it stopped;
And, as I looked and wondered, lo, mine eyes
Were opened, and I saw—

Out of the quiet church came One in white.
His soft-draped raiment shone. His sweet, high face
Was sad beyond the possibilities
Of human woe. He came into the bus
And sat among us. The conductor cursed
His driver for the stop. And he, in turn,
Cursed all the gear, the greasy road, and God,
"Christ!" said the one, unmeaning of offense,
"What silly tantrum's took the old girl now?"
Then stopped, unconscious why, but said no more,
Nor could, with those soft eyes upon his soul.

I looked to see my fellows' faces mazed,
But found them dull, self-satisfied, inane,
Unconscious of our august Passenger.
I shrank within myself, and breathless watched
That wondrous sight—Christ in a motor bus!
And His sad eyes slow quested us, as though
They sought whereon to rest acceptably.

Then, as they dwelt upon each one in turn,
I saw the outward trappings fall away,
And each soul sat in utter nakedness,
Bare to His searching gaze—a wondrous sight
And pitiful, for most were sadly less
Than they appeared. And yet in each there burned
A tiny flame; and as the deep-veiled splendor
Of His eyes turned on them I could see
The tiny flame within each one revive,
Or shrink, according to its ministry.
But most paled small. Mine also. But I felt
It flame again responsive to His own,
Because my eyes were opened, and I saw.

The bus raced on, and as His eyes looked forth.
Upon the bustling streets, where'er they dwelt
I saw the outward trappings fall away
And leave but naked souls and tiny flames.
Just here and there a larger flame leaped up;
But most were small—most pitifully small
And hardly visible. Yet none quite lacked.

And where the flames responsive leaped, there men,
And still more women, turned and looked, and stood
And gazed in breathless wonder after us,

Aware that some strange power had quickened
them,
Not knowing what—and then, I doubted not,
Went on their way with souls uplift and
strong,
For wheresoe'er the flames burned bright, I
saw—
No matter what of robe or flesh it wore—
A spirit beautiful beyond its poor
Embodiment of flesh and outward garb.
Amazing transformations I beheld,
And many pitiful past thought or word.

But we sped quickly, and our course was
marked
By flames that leaped and fell, and souls the
same.
Churches we passed, but, mostly locked and
barred,
They were reserved for one day's use in seven;
Upon the other six the hurrying crowds
Had little use for them. His eyes were pained
As each we passed, and He, through door and
wall,
Searched all in vain the emptiness within,
And saddened at the lack of worshipers.
How eagerly He scanned the endless stream
Of faces that we met! How sad His eyes!—
So few the flames responsive to His own.

As we raced uphill toward Saint Paul's His eyes
Dwelt on the cross all golden in the sun,
And at the people passing in and out.
I saw the sadness in the sweet eyes lift,
But fall again at sight of all the crowds
That clustered beelike round the shops outside—
So few within compared with those without.
Then, of a sudden, He was gone; and I,
Sensing where I should find Him, followed fast.

He stood alone there underneath the dome
Listening intently with a less sad face,
For here were more than the bare two or three
Who by His own good word could claim God's grace.
And, as He smiled on them, the hearts of all
Responsive glowed; new strength was given to them
To bear life's burdens and to conquer ill.
Boys' voices joined in heavenly harmonies,
Which pealed among the roofs, and rose and died,
And lifted souls above earth's common things.
And there, among the dark-robed throng, He knelt,
And I beside Him, thrilling to the core.

The service ended, slow the worshipers
Dispersed, lingering, some, along the aisles
To view the monuments. And as we passed
One marble tomb, shaped like a massive door,
He stopped before the script with glowing eyes
And read, and I read with Him: *"Through the Gate*
Of Death we pass to joyful resurrection."
And as we stood, came hurrying a maid,
Sweet-faced and choicely robed, and very fair,
And made to pass through that great marble door,
Believing it the exit. With a laugh,
Perceiving her mistake, she turned and said:
"I want the shops. I thought this was the door"—
And hurried off to find the right way out.
And He stood gazing after her with eyes
That softly shone, as though to call her mind
To loftier things, then followed where she went.
There, by the bright shop windows, worshipers
Of fashion clustered thick in elbowing haste,
Intent on bargains—and the flames were small.
Their hearts were otherwise engaged, and He
Passed here and there among them wistfully.
He went inside and watched the bargaining,
Perceived the little passions it aroused

And was sore saddened. One, obsequiously,
Tendered his help to find what I might want.
I told him I was with a Friend. He bowed,
Nor dreamed who that Friend was, and we passed on—
Out to the street again, and so to Chepe,
And lingered there amid the hurrying throngs.
And ever He searched eagerly for souls
Responsive, and He found but few, for all
Were too intent upon their merchantry,
And had no time just then for higher thoughts.
Those they left safely wardrobed at their homes,
Along with all their other Sunday things.

On through the highways of the city He,
And I followed all observingly.
Beside the shrinking portal of a church,
Weathered, and old, and gray, and dark with grime,
Two beggars stood, on either side the steps
Which made an eddy from the rushing tide,
And mutely claimed an alm from those who passed.
The door was wide; an organ pealed within,
And some few entered, but the more sped past,
Careless of face or burdened with their cares.
One beggar wore a label—"Deaf and Dumb."
The other—"Blind. Have pity, you who see."

And, as the Christ passed up the dingy steps,
The blind man murmured, "Who was that
that passed?"
And the dumb answered: "Who—I do not
know.
I felt him too. It was no common man."
"The parson maybe. Did he give you aught?"
"Not half a copper. No one gives to-day."
And yet, ever there, in those poor, twisted
souls,
I caught, in passing, glimpse of tiny flames.
The one kept his old, crippled wife from
want;
The other gave to poorer than himself.

Within the pealing organ lifted souls
For a brief space above their daily toil,
Soothed some, and gave to some brief glimpse
of heaven.
And Christ stood gazing on the somber throng,
And on the windows where His Passion
flamed,
And passed unseen among them, and I
watched.
In some the flame leaped fitfully and sank,
And yet they were more hopeful than before,
And knew not why. In some the flame burned
bright
And lit them like a sanctuary light.

I looked to see the organist aflame,
So heavenly sweet the music he evoked,
So purely worshipful, so full of joy.
But, lo! his flame was scarcely visible—
His playing was for praise of men, not God;
His thoughts, through all his noble harmonies,
Were of the earth. He could lift other souls
To heaven, but did content himself with less.
And he in priestly robes, who read a prayer,
No brighter shone. To him, as well, it was
No act of love for Sweet Love's own sweet sake,
But duty to be done, and sooner better done.
The short hour ended; all streamed out, and we,
They to their common rounds, uplifted all
By this retreat within God's quietness.

Then Christ stood watching where the six streets meet,
Where London's heart beats strongest, pulsing new
Red blood through all her veins and arteries
And corpuscles diverse, for good and ill.
A wondrous sight!—as His eyes lingered on
Those hurrying multitudes, great waves of flame
Swept through them, rose and fell, and brightly burned

In unexpected places. There, for one,
In that great, burly constable, who held
The traffic in the hollow of his hand.
Olympian power was his, and yet his heart
Was tender to all smaller things, and he,
The inner unseen soul of him, served God
According to his lights. But here again,
A city magnate, portly, and well fed,
Reeking prosperity at every pore,
Without one single spark of flame within him
Even under that all-quickening glance!
And there
A gutter peddler selling penny toys,
His raiment poor, his face subdued and sad,
Yet in his heart a flame serene and bright.
He too served God according to his light.

But for the most part, sadly shrunk and small,
The flames sank down after that upward burst,
And Christ watched sadly their fast dwindling fires.
And then I saw His eyes light up at sight
Of the great text on that vast-pillared front—
"The Earth is the Lord's and the Fullness thereof."
And He looks round to see the effect of it.
But save Himself—and me, because of Him—

None other saw it; some had never seen,
Nor ever would, their senses glued to earth.
He sighed, and passing on beside the Bank,
Espied a doorway buzzing like a hive,
And entered unperceived. But I, when I
Would follow, was debarred, and stood outside
Till He should come again. It was not long.
He came with stern-set face like unto that
He wore when with a knotted chord He drove
The dealers from the Temple long ago.
Small room for Him where Mammon held full sway,
And all who served him wrestled in the slime
Of their hot bargainings for self and pelf.

We passed to wide drab streets of poorer mien,
With seething hives behind them full of life.
And here again, to my astonishment,
Flames leaped to meet Him, blazing full and strong;
The elemental virtues seed and fruit
Among the poor more freely than the rich—
Sharing of burdens and sweet Charity,
Which covereth the multitude of sins.
And that sad face became less stern and sad
As He passed on from street to street and found
So much of good in such unhopeful ground.

Then to the west He turned once more, amid
The falling night, and, near the Abbey, stood
To watch long serried files of marching men
With sober faces hastening to the war.
And here were many flames and wondrous bright;
And yet His face was pained and sad beyond
The possibilities of sadness. He,
The Prince of Peace, and these, not few of them,
His followers, hastening to the war.
He raised a hand in blessing pitiful,
And once again the flames burned wondrous bright;
And they went on, recharged, to face their doom.

Long hours we spent in places strange to me,
For where the people thronged He went, and I
Went with Him, nor could do aught else.
And here were light and laughter, and much mirth,
But of a text so attenuate
That none could help perceive its poverty.
And here at best the flames were flickering sparks;
And His sweet face was tragically sad.

And so, at last, beneath the midnight sky
We stood, beside the Circus fountain,
Watching, watching, watching all that passed;
And here indeed the flames were small and few,
For in that midnight traffic of the streets
None thought of Him, nor ever one desired.
Then as I watched I saw Him raise His face
To heaven, and O it was a sad, sad face!—
The saddest face that mortal man e'er saw.
He raised His hands. I saw the wounds. They bled
As when His weight hung from them on the cross.
Then, in a moment, He was gone,
And I alone.

From out the passing throng one came to me,
In goodly raiment, fair to look upon;
She laid a white hand on my arm and smiled,
Smiled more than winningly, and in my ear
Chanted below her breath the little song
Of life and death:
"Come let us eat and drink, and merry be!
Life is so short, so long eternity."
Then, gazing in my eyes, still full of Him,
She saw, and flung away with scornful gibe:
"He's crazy. Yes, I saw it in his eyes"—
And turned and joined her sisters of the night.
And I went on alone.

Hadst Thou Been Here

A. D. 33

THEN said Martha unto Jesus, *"Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."*

When Mary was come she fell down at His feet, saying, *"Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."*

Jesus wept.

A. D. 1914-19—

Hadst Thou been here,
Our loved ones had not died,
Nor Life and Love again been crucified.

Hadst Thou been here,
This horror had not been,
Nor earth the downfall of her hopes had seen.

Hadst Thou been here!—
How couldst Thou be here, Lord,
When we denied the Cross and chose the sword?

Hadst Thou been here!—
Ah! whose the fault that left
Faith of her hope and Life of love bereft?

Hadst Thou been here—
Yet art Thou never far;
'Tis we alone that raise the hindering bar.

Hadst Thou been here—
And yet Thy word is clear:
"Who wills can have. Reach up and draw
me near."

How canst Thou be here, Lord,
When man's desire
Climbs not the stars, but wallows in the mire?

Where art Thou, Lord?
Let each man's own heart say
Why Christ is found no more of him this day.

The Spread Table

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies."

THE Powers of Ill with fury rage,
And Life's assembled hosts engage
With every cunning equipage.

The Beasts Without crouch at the spring,
With fell intent and menacing,
The Grace of Life to rend and wring.

The Beasts Within lie coiled about
The will and heart, and swiftly out
When Faith and Hope fall on misdoubt.
But lo!—within their sight
A table fair is spread,
A table fair and white,
With Wine and Broken Bread—
With Red Red Wine and Broken Bread,
All amply plenishèd.
And at its head
In torn white gown,
With blood-sweat in His matted hair
Beneath the twisted crown,
The Lord Christ kneels in His despair,
Bowed in an agony of prayer,
His face sunk in His wounded hands,
And waits. . . . And there—
His table waiting stands.

The Menace of the Skies

God's gracious sky has gained
A new significance
In these grim days of war.
Time was when upward glance
Was prayer of thankfulness and praise
For peaceful nights and full, harmonious days;
But now we look askance
Into the wide expanse,

Sun-lit, cloud-flecked—
  Into the pregnant dome,
Moon-graced, star-decked,
  Not knowing what may come—
  God's blessing or a bomb.

It may be life—
Glory of stars and moon,
God's peace and smiling sun;
Then, in the twinkling of an eye,
Grim, blasting death,
One short-cut—
Eternity.

But soon again
  The earth and sky
Shall yield to Him
  Their sovereignty,
And to man's everlasting gain
The Lord shall reign
  Eternally.

The Goodly Company

Thou with us and we with Thee,
Maketh goodly company,
Proof against all villainy,
Strong to vanquish tyranny;
Thou with us, and we with Thee,
Maketh goodly company.

Who would fight a goodly fight
Must have cause both just and right,
Then with God's good oversight—
He in mail of proof is dight;
Who would fight a goodly fight
Must have cause both just and right.

Who would God upon his side
And with Him would be allied,
By God's will his course must guide;
Fully then he's fortified,
Who hath God upon his side
And with Him is close allied.

War

Only when you see it
Will you dare to think you know it;
And the more you see, the more you'll know
That no man e'er *can* know it.
It's only when you sense it in each fiber of your being;
It's only when it smites the very life-chords of your being;
It's only when its thunders strike like death-drums on your soul
That you confess that mortal man can never know the whole;

That though he sees, and sees, and sees, in
spite of all his seeing,
No mortal man shall know the whole,
Is God's all-wise decreeing,
For at the most 'tis but the crust
That you can see—the surface things—
The upper, outside face of things,
Not the horrors down below it.
No mortal man shall ever know
In fullest full what lies below;
The awful whole would crush his soul,
And so no man may know it.
God only knows in full the woes
That fester down below it.

The Master-Carver

The Master-Carver's father came
To the carving school each day.
He was old and frail, but still the flame
Of Hope lit up his lingering way,
For he would carve himself a name,
And none would his great hope gainsay.

His poor old hands were cramped and cold,
His eyes were not what they had been;
If he must live on what he sold,
His living truly had been lean.
But all the others, young and old,
Encouraged him success to win.

And every night, when all had gone,
The Master-Carver would come in,
And, seated at the bench alone,
Would trim and fine each crooked line
In ways that he had made his own,
And vest with grace the poor design.

And when the old man came next day,
He'd catch his breath—"Did I do this?
I'm getting on," he'd gayly say;
"This really is a pretty piece.
Now very soon I'll pay my way
And justify your kindnesses."

So too with us, the Master-Mind
In secret smooths the crooked lines
With tools that cut but to be kind,
And tenderly He shapes and fines
Our lives to that His Love designed,
Till we become his worthy shrines.

The Red Spring

Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo!
Cuckoo in the wood there—
Saucy jade, I'm afraid
Up to little good there!

Yet I give you greeting for this quiet good
reason—
Here's to our first meeting of the season!
For old Winter truly pushed himself unduly
Into Spring's most charming but delayed
house-warming.
So I lift my hat—
Not to you, though, Cuckoo,
But to Him who made you,
And, when making, bade you
Come to bring us Spring
For our heartening.

Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo!
Flute away, you jade!
Billing, cooing, wooing, in the sun and shade,
Mighty mischief brewing, all their good un-
doing
When your neighbors' houses you invade, I'm
afraid.
Flute away out there
The while I say a prayer,
Asking His rich blessing
On the coming year.

A week ago north wind and snow
Held us in grip, nor would let go;
But now the eager trees are flushing,
Buds through swaddling bands are pushing;

Everywhere the lambs are frisking,
Baby calves their tails are whisking;
The birds are singing merrily,
The very crows caw cheerily,
All the feathered folk are building,
Building unto Him who made them,
And in making sweetly bade them
Build to Him in Spring;
And to Him are yielding
In their lays heartfelt praise
For His winter shielding.

Willow's yellow feather
Tokens better weather;
Colt's-foot gold weaves everywhere
Patches fair and rich and rare
On earth's coat that was so bare;
The sky is blue, the sun is gold,
All life is new-made from the old;
The world is fair—yea, very fair.
So unto God be praise
For these God-given days!

But—God of grace, forgive us all—
Just over there, my sisters, my brothers!
Just over there Death's heavy pall
Hangs black and grim and tragical;
For there—but a few waning leagues over there—

The Devil has loosed himself out of his lair,
And is running amok, mad, and berserk, and bare.
The death shells are thundering there through the air;
On the soft breath of Spring Death is flying, is flying,
And our brothers are dying, are dying, are dying;
They are dying out there in the sweet Spring air,
As they died in the snow but a few days ago;
And God, ever watching, is sighing, is sighing
At the sight of His kingdom brought low.
For the plowman is driving his red-hot share
Through a bloody and blazing furrow,
And the earth that was fair
Is aflame and aflare—
A chaos of horror and ruin and woe,
And Life crawls and dies in its burrow.
And the Reaper is reaping—is reaping—is reaping,
And the women and children are weeping—are weeping,
And men in their thousands are falling—are falling.
Our men and their men are falling—are falling,

Are falling and dying in numbers so vast
That heaven and earth both alike are aghast
At the holocaust all so appalling.
And the world, in despair
Grinds its teeth at its share,
At its witless but none the less crucial share,
In the tale of this terrible massacre.
God made His earth fair,
All radiant and rare,
And man has made of it—a sepulcher.
And Love lies bleeding—scarce one heeding—
God's Love bleeding lies,
While once again a graceless world
His Hope denies, His Power defies,
And, with unheard-of infamies,
The Lord Christ crucifies.

Here at Thy feet we pray, O Lord,
End now forever this abhorred
False judgment of the sword!
And grant that henceforth nevermore,
So long as heaven and earth endure,
Shall mortal men
Be subject to such woes again!
That, of this bitterness and pain
Spring up within each heart and brain
The will invincible for grace
To climb Thy nobler ways!

That never upon this earth again
While Man and Life and Time remain,
Shall life sink 'neath the curse of Cain,
Nor Christ again be slain!
Never again, O Lord, our God—
NEVER AGAIN!

The Dead Dog

ONLY a dog—and dead at that—
A poor, old, wretched, worn-out beast,
A homeless, friendless, pariah dog,
Not much accounted in the East.

Too old at last to filch his food,
He laid him in the dusty road
Upon his shrunken side,
Drew in his feet, curled back his lips, and died.

And not one mourned him.
Living, none owned; and dead, all scorned him.

"He stinks," said one who passed;
And one, "Well, dead at last."
"The filthy brute," a third.
All men at him did gird.

"He breeds corruption," said a priest,
And drew his robes the closer lest
He catch the pest.
Not one regret from any
For the poor dead beast.

And then along the dusty road
The Master came—
The Rabbi, Doctor of the Gentiles,
In his fame.
For word of him had spread,
And all men watched him
With observant eyes
To carp and criticize.

His glance fell on this other homeless thing,
Fouler in death
Than when, with fetid breath,
He skulked his scraps among the offscouring.

But when the others their disgust displayed,
"Yet see," the Master gently said,
"What fair white teeth the poor dog had!"

They saw corruption only. He, beneath,
Found virtue in the fair white teeth.

Some good in everything you'll find
If you but keep an open mind.

Volvo

Volvo, the Clown, in his old age turned monk,
But, lacking aptitude, ere long was sunk
In melancholy; for his untrained tongue
Murdered the prayers, and his weird chanting
wrung
His neighbors' withers till they were unstrung,
And he to silence by their frowns was stung.

His humble soul was drowned in dire distress;
Lonely he wandered, full of heaviness,
Shunning his fellows, daring not to tell
How this, his hoped-for heaven, was more like
hell.

But, rambling in the cellars one dark day,
Forcing his rough old tongue to chant and pray
Until the stridor of his grunts and groans
Warped in their beds the old foundation
stones,
He lighted on an image, old and worn,
Of her of whom the Saviour Christ was born,
And knelt him down and gazed at her,
And she
Returned his gaze with sweet benignity.
Old was the image, dusty, dim, yet naught
Could hide from him the beauty that he sought.

So long he knelt there in profound despair
At his sad lack of skillfulness in prayer
That his old limbs grew cramped and stiff and sore;
And, their accustomed temper to restore,
He stood upon his head and kicked full free,
And then, rejoicing in his power's recovery,
He turned cart-wheels as he had done of yore
Until the sweat ran out of every pore.

And as he whirled, heels overhead, it seemed
To him that on the Virgin's face there gleamed
A sweet, approving smile, as though in truth
She found delight in worship so uncouth.
Sure she had never seen the like before,
He was right glad, and tumbled more and more.

Thereafter every day Volvo retired
To that dark cellar and, his whole soul fired
With this new worship where he did excel,
Threw cart-wheels by the hour, and threw them well.

At last
One caught him at it, and with face aghast,
Sped to the Abbot, dragged him thither fast,
Speechless with horror at the awful sight,
Palsied with fear lest heaven the house should smite.

The wise old Abbot held him still, and stood
And said a prayer, and saw that here was good.
"With all his might he worships as he can,
And more than that comes not to mortal man."
And as they watched—so runs the story yet—
The smiling Virgin bent and wiped the sweat
With her own hand off Volvo's dripping face,
In token of her understanding grace.

The Wandering Jew

"Go quicker, Jesus!"
Kartaphilos said,
And smote the Prisoner on the head
As He left the Judgment Hall.
"I go," the Christ replied,
"But thou, for that foul blow—
Linger thou here upon this side
Until I bid thee go!"

And so through all the centuries since then,
Undying, Kartaphilos drags his chain
Of lengthening years the wide world over,
Weary and fain;
Soul-shrunken, life's lamp dim,
He craves sweet Death, but all in vain;
Death passes by with cold disdain
And will have none of him.

Hungering for that which most men dread,
He dies not, nor can die
Until the Lord Christ come again
To loose his misery.

Naught dies—thought, word, or deed, once given,
Lives on and on and makes for hell or heaven.

Daily Bread—Verb. Sap

Thrush Dear! Throstle Dear!
Mavis!—Graybird!—Can you hear,
Piping away so loud and clear,
Up in the bush of the elm tree there?
Singing your matins so sweet and so sweet,
That you love to repeat, and repeat, and repeat,
So that we down below here may share in the treat—
Say!—What have you got for your breakfast, Dear?

Breakfast indeed!—and indeed!—and indeed!—
Why, I had my first meal, my first meal, my first meal

Long ago, long ago, when the jolly new sun
Came up on the run, on the run, on the run,
Came up through the mist, in the east, in the east,
And came and looked down on me there in my nest.
And what did I have?—
What—what—what?—What—what—what?
Why, I'd everything, everything, all of the best—
O yes, I had everything, all of the best.
There was plenty for me, you see, plenty for me—
There was plenty for me and for her and the rest,
O, plenty and plenty for her and the rest.
Yes, she's just down below here, below here, below here,
She's just down below here arranging the nest.
But she's busy, you see; very busy, you see,
Too busy as yet to get properly dressed.

O, there's plenty and plenty to eat if you look,
You can always get plenty by hook or by crook,
By hook or by crook, if you know where to look—
If you know where to look, where to look, where to look—

There's enough for us all to be found all about;
God's larder is full, and it never runs out;
It's full, and it's full, and it never runs out—
It never runs, never runs, never runs out.

Robin the Blest,
With the red, red breast
Swelling your chest
In its crimson vest,
You don't seem to get any thinner,
You bold-faced, you beady-eyed!
Cock-a-hoop!—legs astride!
Which are you fullest of—
Pickings, or trust, or pride?
Say—Little Mr. Self-Satisfied,
What have you had for your dinner?

Dinner?—eh? Dinner?
Well, as I'm a sinner,
I'm really not sure—Let me see—I can't say—
Was it dinner I had in the kitchen to-day?
Or, stay! It's just possible that was my tea;
For, you see, I'm not great on economy,
And wherever I chance on a tit-bit or dainty,
I go—well, *you* know—kind of empty and fainty.
So I just pick a trifle whenever my cavity
Shows any sign of unusual depravity.

But life is fine sport, and I've never gone
short;
God always provides for a Robin's support.

Blackbird, Dear! Blackbird, Dear!
Fluting away so merrily,
So lustily, so cheerily,
Up on the topmost twig there—
What have you got for your supper, sir?

Supper, sir? Supper, sir?
How should I know, and why should I care?
Whatever it is, there's enough and to spare;
There's plenty for all, and I'm sure of a share:
Plenty for her, and plenty for me,
And plenty for all the family.
If it's not just here, it'll be just there;
There's always enough and plenty to spare.
God's big larder has never been bare,
And He always sees to the Blackbird's fare.

Diamond Dust

My lady walks on diamond dust,
All meaner causeway scorning,
On diamond dust, on diamond dust,
Upon a sunny morning:

On diamond dust because she must,
  Since all for her adorning,
Earth's crust becomes just diamond dust
  Upon a sunny morning.

Ten thousand million gleaming eyes
  Meet hers with merry twinkles,
And her quick feet with sparkles greet
  And tiny rainbow-sprinkles.

And when she climbs the stile to cross
  The shimmering, dew-drenched meadow,
Each blade of grass that sees her pass
To kiss her helm flings out a gem
  Which dies in her sweet shadow.

So jewels rare are everywhere
  To welcome her sweet passing;
They are, I swear, beyond compare,
  All earthly gems surpassing.

And so she walks on jewels fair,
  All meaner causeway scorning,
On jewels rare beyond compare,
  On every sunny morning.

How—When—Where

It is not so much WHERE you live
As HOW, and WHY, and WHEN you live,
That answers in the affirmative,
Or maybe in the negative,
The question, Are you fit to live?

It is not so much WHERE you live
As HOW you live, and whether good
Flows from you through your neighborhood.

And WHY you live, and whether you
Aim and noblest ends pursue,
And keep Life brimming full and true.

And WHEN you live, and whether Time
Is at its nadir or at its prime,
And whether you descend or climb.

It is not so much WHERE you live
As whether while you live you *live*
And to the world your highest give,
And so make answer positive
That you are truly fit to live.

Honor the Guns

Honor the guns!
And the men behind the guns!
We know full well what mighty things they've done;
They have shattered Godless Might,
They have 'stablished Truth and Right;
They have fought for Britain's honor—and they've won.
But for the guns—
And the men behind the guns—
And the makers of the fodder for the guns—
Would you dare to say to-day who to-morrow's world would sway?
Would you dare to say where Britain might have been?
We are grateful to the guns,
And the men behind the guns,
And the makers of the fodder for the guns.
Had they failed us, nor availed us, when the Devil's thrust assailed us,
Who will dare to say where Britain might have been?

They have thundered day and night,
They have thundered in their might.
There's a world's demand for Right

In those guns.
All along the blazing front
Men have done beyond their wont,
But they've only stood the brunt
Through the guns—

Through the never-ending thunder of the guns—
Through the wonder and the thunder of the guns.
They are clearing out the Huns.
They are thundering for peace,
They are thundering release
For our sons.

Honor the guns!—
And the men behind the guns!—
And the makers of the fodder for the guns!
There is something Mighty More than the mightiest human power
In the world-redeeming thunder of the guns.
They are pushing back the evil,
They are crushing out the Devil,
They are giving earth a new birth for her sons.

Canst Thou Forgive?

THEN shall the Red Cross Women of
Germany say unto Him:

"Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?"

And He shall answer them, saying:

"Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not to me."

Now, God forgive you,
For we cannot—yet!
Nor can forget—not yet!—not yet!—
Your treatment of our sons,
Our wounded ones.

Parched with the fevers of their wounds,
You held the cup
To their dry lips—then drank it up,
And jeered their wistful need.
And you, with cruelty profound,
You spat into the cup,
Then poured it on the ground.
Good Lord! Could any woman do such deed
To other women's sons?

And worse!—you were a nurse,
Pledged by your calling to give special heed
To those in need.
Well—land that can breed
Such fiends in woman's form
Shall reap the curse.
Better to suffer and to die of thirst
Than live accurst
With that sting ever in you,
Gnawing your soul with agonies of pain
When to its better self it comes again—
That, to a dying man in mortal woe,
Your service was—a blow!

Ah!—you who struck Christ that day,
And wounded him as mortally
As he who thrust the spear into His side
The day He died on Calvary.

That cup of water you withheld from *Him*
Who gave His all for you, and died
Your poor soul to redeem.

You spat into *His* cup,
And from *His* thirsty eyes you watched the
light
Fade sadly—and you jeered the sight!

Lord Christ! Canst Thou forgive?
Thou mayest. But we—not yet!—not yet!—
Nor can we e'er forget.

For the Sick and the Wounded, the Dying, and all Prisoners of War

Be near to every needy soul
This day!
Be greater than their greatest need,
We pray!
Come closer than their need to all
Who from their depths upon Thee call!
May every soul turn unto Thee
At once in its extremity,
And find in Thee the Friend Indeed
Who will supply its every need.
So shall it be all well with them,
Though man their helplessness contemn.
Who cast themselves upon Thy care
With Thee shall all their burden share,
And Thou wilt lift them from despair.

Inasmuch

As you did it to my brother,
You did it unto Me.
His wounds were Mine, his hardships Mine:
We bore them all for thee.

It was I whom you did succor
When he trod that toilsome track;
He had been in hell, and you knew it well
When you gave us welcome back.

I am there in all My brothers,
Who gave their all for Me.
Can life grudge aught to those who sought
At such a cost to set her free,
And on their painful crosses bought
Her Larger Liberty?

. . . . .

Inasmuch as ye shall tender
Service to My broken ones,
Unto Me the like ye render—
See Me in My wounded sons!
Let not one lie down with sorrow,
Let not one fall by the way.
Build them up a glad to-morrow,
Share with them The Coming Day!

W. A. A. C. S. and W. R. E. N. S.

Great work! State work! Willingly done and well,
For the men who are doing so much for us—
Ay—more than words can tell!
Right work! White work! Faithfully, skillfully done,
But the whole of the soul of it will not be known
Till the war is properly won.

They mend the men, they tend the men;
They help them carry on;
They drop a little veil upon
The woes they've undergone.

They feed the men, they speed the men;
They make their daily bread;
They mend them while they're living,
And they tend them when they're dead.

There's many a lonely man out there
They've saved from black despair;
There's many a lowly grave out there
Made gracious by their care.

They toil for them, they moil for them;
Help lame dogs over stiles,
And do their best to buck them up
With cheery words and smiles.

They're just a little bit of home,
Come out to lend a hand.
They're gleams of warm, bright sunshine
In a dreary, weary land.

They are sweet as pinks and daisies;
Just the sight of them is good,
When you've lived for eighteen months or so
In the sink of Flanders mud.

New work, true work, gallantly, patiently done
For the men who are giving their all for us—
Your brother, lover, son.
High work! Thy work, if truly to Thee it's done!
But we never shall know all the debt we owe
Till the war is really won.

Your Helping Hand

(For the Munition Workers.)

FRIEND indeed is friend in need,
But truest friend is friend in deed.

Your helping hand may save a soul;
Will you withhold it?
Life is paying heavy toll—
Love can enfold it.

You surely will not let us sink
For want of a helping hand!
We are sometimes trembling on the brink
Of things you'd scarce understand:

The strange new calls, the loneliness,
The gleaming ways that offer
Chance of escape for a little space
From the things from which we suffer.

Ho yus! You reckon us rude and rough,
But just you try it—you'll soon have enough.
It's doing *and* doing the same old same thing
That makes us all ready to scream or to sing,

Or to shout or to dance, or to kick or to prance,
Or to let out in any wild, crazy-mad fling,
Just to get right away from the same old same thing
That wears us and tears us and leaves us chewed string.

The life is new and hard and strange—
Friends, home, all left behind us;
And now and then we crave a change,
And there's no one much to mind us.

If 'twern't for the boys out there in the wet
We'd jolly soon cut it and chuck it, you bet.
But we know if we fail 'em, the blighters'll flail 'em,
And we're here to help wale 'em—and—don't —you—forget!

A pleasant word, a look of cheer,
And to feel that some one's caring—
That's all we need to end our fear
And make life still worth bearing.

Life is levying bitter toll;
Let Love enfold it!
Your helping hand may save a soul—
Dare you withhold it?

Carry On!—and Make It So

We look to you—each one of you—
To make Life better than before,
For God is shaping all things new,
And He has greater still in store.
Carry on, Boys and Girls! Carry on!
Carry on, all!—and Make it so!

Be clean—in body and in mind!
Think high, and live up to your thought!
In work well done you'll more joy find
Than all that can by wealth be bought.
Carry on, Boys and Girls! Carry on!
Carry on, all!—and Make it so!

Let every thought and word and deed
Be kind and honest, brave and true!
Never refuse another's need—
Do as you'd have him do to you!
Carry on, Boys and Girls! Carry on!
Carry on, all!—and Make it so!

Be strong! Be patient! Pray for grace
To bear you steadfast through all ill!
Against all evil set your face,
And bravely do your Master's will.
Carry on, Boys and Girls! Carry on!
Carry on, all!—and Make it so!

Do all you do as unto Him
  Who keeps you ever in His sight!
Remember—when the days are dim—
  He is The Way, The Truth, The Light.
    Carry on, Boys and Girls! Carry on!
    Carry on, all—and make it so!

Look to The Light with hearts aflame!
  Fight every evil thing you meet!
And never stain your Captain's name!
  Nor suffer Him to know defeat!
    Carry on, Boys and Girls! Carry on!
    Carry on, all!—and Make it so!

If——!

If—by one touch of Their Omnipotence
God the Creator, Christ the Redeemer,
Laid upon all mankind Their will this day,
Think what might be—!

Think what *would* be
If every man throughout the whole wide world
Allowed the God within him fullest sway,
Obeyed the highest dictates of his soul,
Did right for right's own sake, without a
    thought
For his own good or gain,
Think—what—would—be!

Wrong would die instant death. The gaping wounds
Of all Time's centuries of ill would heal.
The quick, full-rounded pulse of life would beat
As ne'er before,
And God's Own Peace would everywhere have sway
For evermore.

Men would all strive each for his neighbor's good,
And all mankind form one Great Brotherhood.
Self-seeking, self-aggrandisement no more
With broken shards would strew His temple floor;
No more would twist His image all awry,
Nor doom His sons in senseless rivalry
By the red sword's arbitrament to die.

When, as in heaven, on earth His will is done,
God's kingdom in the heart of man will come.

What Do I Owe?

WHAT do I owe?
Nay, Lord, what do I not?
—All that I am,
And all that I have got:
All that I am,
And that how small a thing,
Compared with all
Thy goodly fostering!

What do I owe
To all the world around?
—To set Thee first;
That Grace may more abound;
To set Thee first,
To hold Thee all in all,
And, come what may,
To follow Thy High Call.

What do I owe
To this dear land of ours?
—All of my best:
My time, my thought, my powers.
All of my best
Is yet too small to give
That this our land
May to Thine increase live.

What do I owe
To those who follow on?
—To build more sure
The freedom we have won;
To build more sure
The Kingdoms of Thy Grace—
Kingdoms secure
In Truth and Righteousness.

What do I owe
To Christ my Lord, my King?
—That all my life
Be one sweet offering;
That all my life
To noblest heights aspire,
That all I do
Be touched with holy fire.

Acorns and Oaks

A MAN may count the acorns on an oak,
But who shall say
How many great oaks may
Of one acorn
Be born?

Love's Giving

Love gives its best,
And knows no rest.
Its highest joy
Is giving joy.
It knows no rest
Until its best
Is given.
And that is why
Love at its best
Is heaven.

À Dieu and Au Revoir

As you love me, let there be
No mourning when I go—
No tearful eyes,
No hopeless sighs,
No woe—nor even sadness!
Indeed, I would not have you sad,
For I myself shall be full glad
With the high triumphant gladness
Of a soul made free
Of God's sweet liberty.
—No windows darkened,
For my own
Will be flung wide, as ne'er before,

To catch the radiant inpour
Of Love that shall in full atone
For all the ills that I have done;
And the good things left undone;
—No voices hushed;
My own, full-flushed
With an immortal hope, will rise
In ecstasies of new-born bliss
And joyful melodies.

Rather, of your sweet courtesy,
Rejoice with me
At my soul's loosening from captivity.
Wish me "Bon voyage!"
As you do a friend
Whose joyous visit finds its happy end,
And bid me both "à Dieu!"
And "Au revoir!"
Since, though I come no more,
I shall be waiting there to greet you
At His door.

And as the feet of The Bearers tread
The ways I trod,
Think not of me as dead,
But, rather,
"Happy, thrice happy, he whose course is sped!
He has gone home—to God,
His Father!"

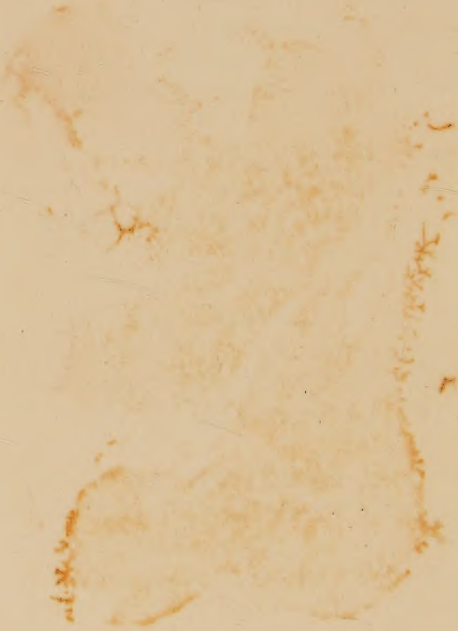
Waiting

O, BUT it's hard, hard waiting,
When no news comes along,
And one's heart is sick with the constant prick
Of the dread that something's wrong.

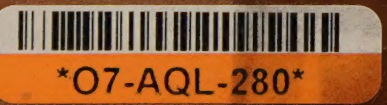
Three weeks without a letter—
And you used to write each day!
And any second Death may have beckoned
You to the Higher Way.

Three weeks!—not even a postcard
To say you are alive!
We bravely hope, but it's hard to cope
With the fears that on silence thrive.

O, but it's hard, hard waiting
Outside that close-shut door,
With never a sound from the silence profound,
And one's heart chilled through to the core!



Discard


O7-AQL-280